



DARK NIGHTS

2

DEATH METAL

ON
A
HIGHWAY
TO
HELL!



Capullo
Za
+ fco
Glapion

AGES 13+

SNYDER + CAPULLO + GLAPION + PLASCENCIA



JULY

WONDER WOMAN

#759

Story by
**MARIKO
TAMAKI**

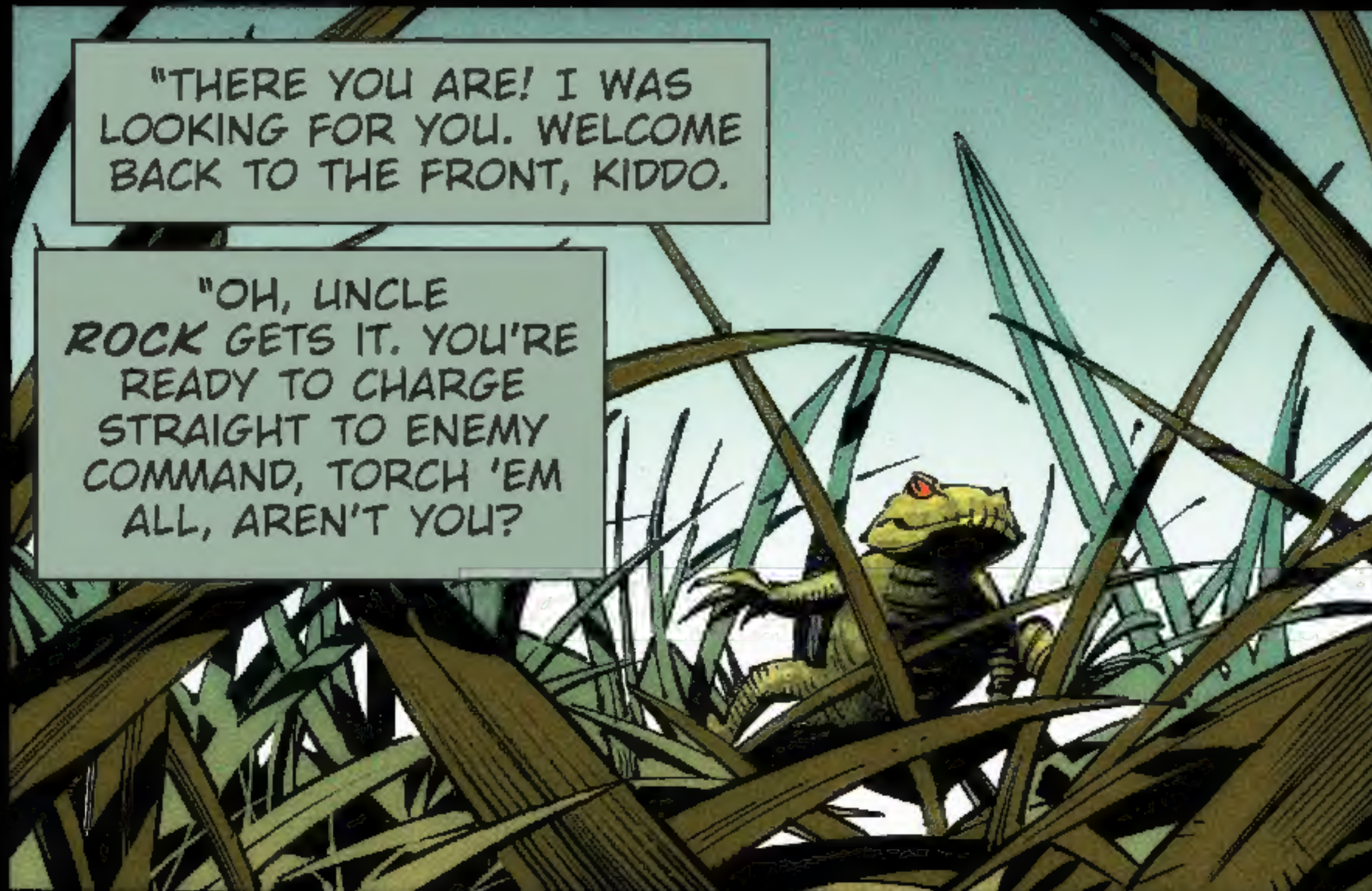
Art by
**MIKEL
JANÍN**



Cover by David Marquez

TM & © DC

**New villains.
New creative team.
A brand-new day for
the Amazon warrior!**



"THERE YOU ARE! I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU. WELCOME BACK TO THE FRONT, KIDDO.

"OH, UNCLE ROCK GETS IT. YOU'RE READY TO CHARGE STRAIGHT TO ENEMY COMMAND, TORCH 'EM ALL, AREN'T YOU?



"BUT SEE, THE GREAT WISDOM OF *GENERALS* SAYS WARS ARE WON HILL BY HILL. HELL, BLADE BY BLADE OF GRASS...

"...YOU CREEP, YOU SLITHER, UNTIL YOUR TEETH ARE AT THEIR DAMN TOES."



CASTLE BAT, COME IN! MY LORD?

IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, THERE'S NO SIGN OF THEM YET. BUT I SWEAR, IF THEY DARE COME THIS WAY, THE BATOM WILL TEACH THEM, BIG THINGS COME IN SMALL--



DEATH METAL

AN ANTI-CRISIS PART II
BE THE FERN

BY SCOTT "96*&\$#@" SNYDER & GREG "THE CHOSEN ONE" CAPULLO



WITH

INKS - JONATHAN "GOD-KILLER" GLAPION

COLORS - FCO "FEARMONGER" PLASCENCIA

LETTERS - TOM "THE TORMENTOR" NAPOLITANO

COVER BY GREG CAPULLO, JONATHAN GLAPION & FCO PLASCENCIA

AQUAMAN VARIANT COVER BY DAVID "DEMONBORN" FINCH
& STEVE "FURY FIST" FIRCHOW

LOBO VARIANT COVER BY JEROME "THE OBLITERATOR" OPENA

HARLEY QUINN VARIANT COVER BY STANLEY "ARTGERM" "THE LAMENTED" LAU

1:25 VARIANT COVER BY DOUG "THE DEATHLESS" MAHNKE
& DAVID "BLOOD RAIN" BARON

CARTOGRAPHER - JARED "BLUDGEONING" BLANDO

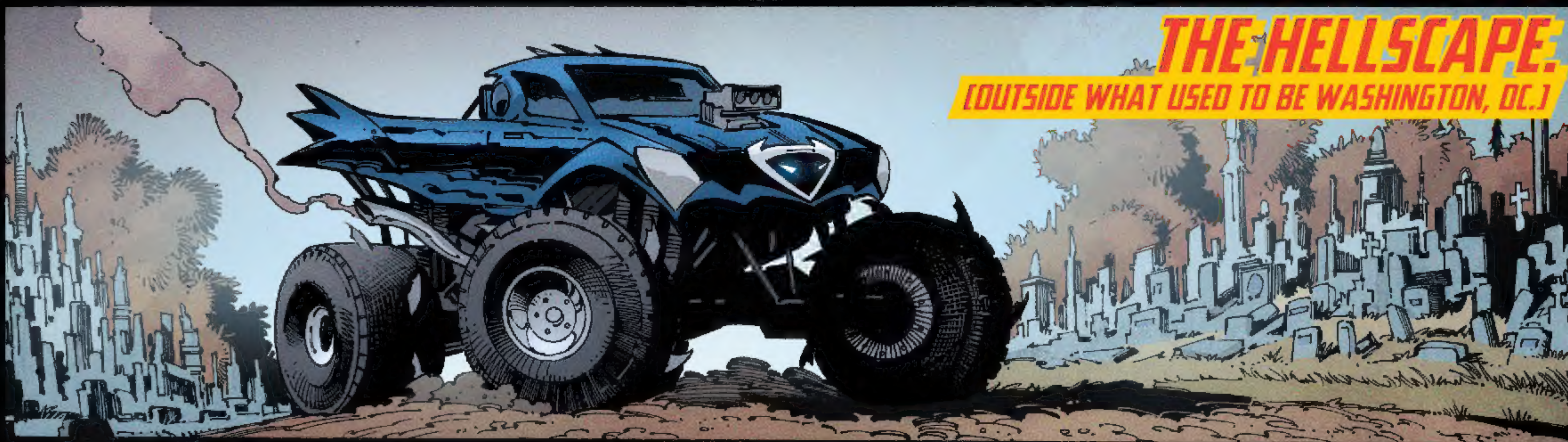
PUBLICATION DESIGN - DARRAN "RAGNOROK" ROBINSON

ASSOCIATE EDITOR - ANDREW "SPEED NINJA" MARINO

EDITOR - MARIE "THE SAVIOR" JAVINS

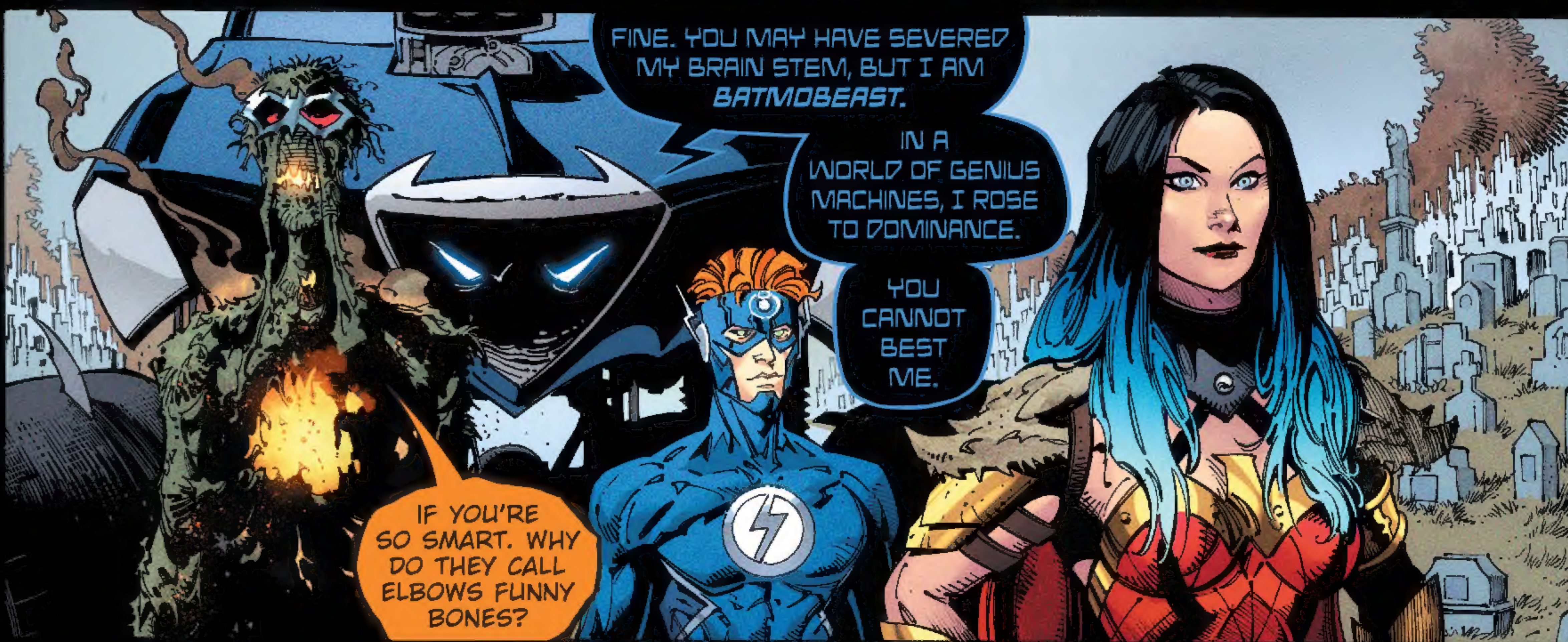
SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY

THE HELLSCAPE.
(OUTSIDE WHAT USED TO BE WASHINGTON, D.C.)



WHERE
HAVE YOU TAKEN
ME?!

HEY! YOU!



FINE. YOU MAY HAVE SEVERED
MY BRAIN STEM, BUT I AM
BATMOBEAST.

IN A
WORLD OF GENIUS
MACHINES, I ROSE
TO DOMINANCE.

YOU
CANNOT
BEST
ME.

IF YOU'RE
SO SMART. WHY
DO THEY CALL
ELBOWS FUNNY
BONES?



WHAT
DOES
THAT...

FINE.

beep
boop
beep

THE
ANSWER IS A JOKE.
"AN ELBOW IS CALLED A
FUNNY BONE BECAUSE
IT'S HUMERUS." TRY
HARDER NEXT T--



ALEC, I'VE BEEN AROUND THE
MULTIVERSE AND IT'S IMPERATIVE
I WARN YOU, THAT WAS A
DAD JOKE.

IMPOSSIBLE.
THE GREEN DOES
NOT--

ENOUGH. WE NEED TO
FIND BRUCE FAST, WHILE
THE DARK KNIGHTS ARE
STILL REELING FROM THE
BATMAN WHO LAUGHS'
DEATH.



WELL, AS A LORD OF THE DEAD, HIDING IN THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST CEMETERY MAKES SENSE. BUT I DO NOT SENSE BRUCE HERE, DIANA.



THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S IN THE OTHER CEMETERY.

WHAT OTHER ONE?



THIS OTHER ONE.



HOW DO I NOT KNOW ABOUT THIS PLACE?



IT'S CALLED **VALHALLA CEMETERY**, OR THE **CRYPT OF HEROES**. IT'S A SACRED AND LONG HELD SECRET.

GUARDED BY MAGIC, SCIENCE, AND TRUST. THE RESTING PLACE OF FALLEN FRIENDS. PROTECTED BY A ROTATION OF TRUSTED CUSTODIANS.

WHO'S GUARDING IT NOW?

I DON'T KNOW, I'M JUST GLAD IT'S HERE.

I WAS WORRIED THAT WHEN **PERPETUA** REARRANGED THE WORLD FOR THE BATMAN WHO LAUGHS, LANDMARKS LIKE THIS WERE LOST, BUT IT SEEMS EVERYTHING IS STILL INTACT. JUST... TWISTED AROUND.

A WORLD MADE MONSTR--





IT'S PRONOUNCED
"MA HUNKEL." SHE WAS
THE GUARDIAN OF THE
FIRST HEADQUARTERS OF
THE *JUSTICE SOCIETY*
OF AMERICA.

THAT'D
BE US,
HON.



FATE,
WILDCAT.

SWAMP THING.
YOU'VE LOST
WEIGHT.

ALAN, YOU DON'T
KNOW HOW *GOOD*
IT IS TO SEE
YOU AGAIN.

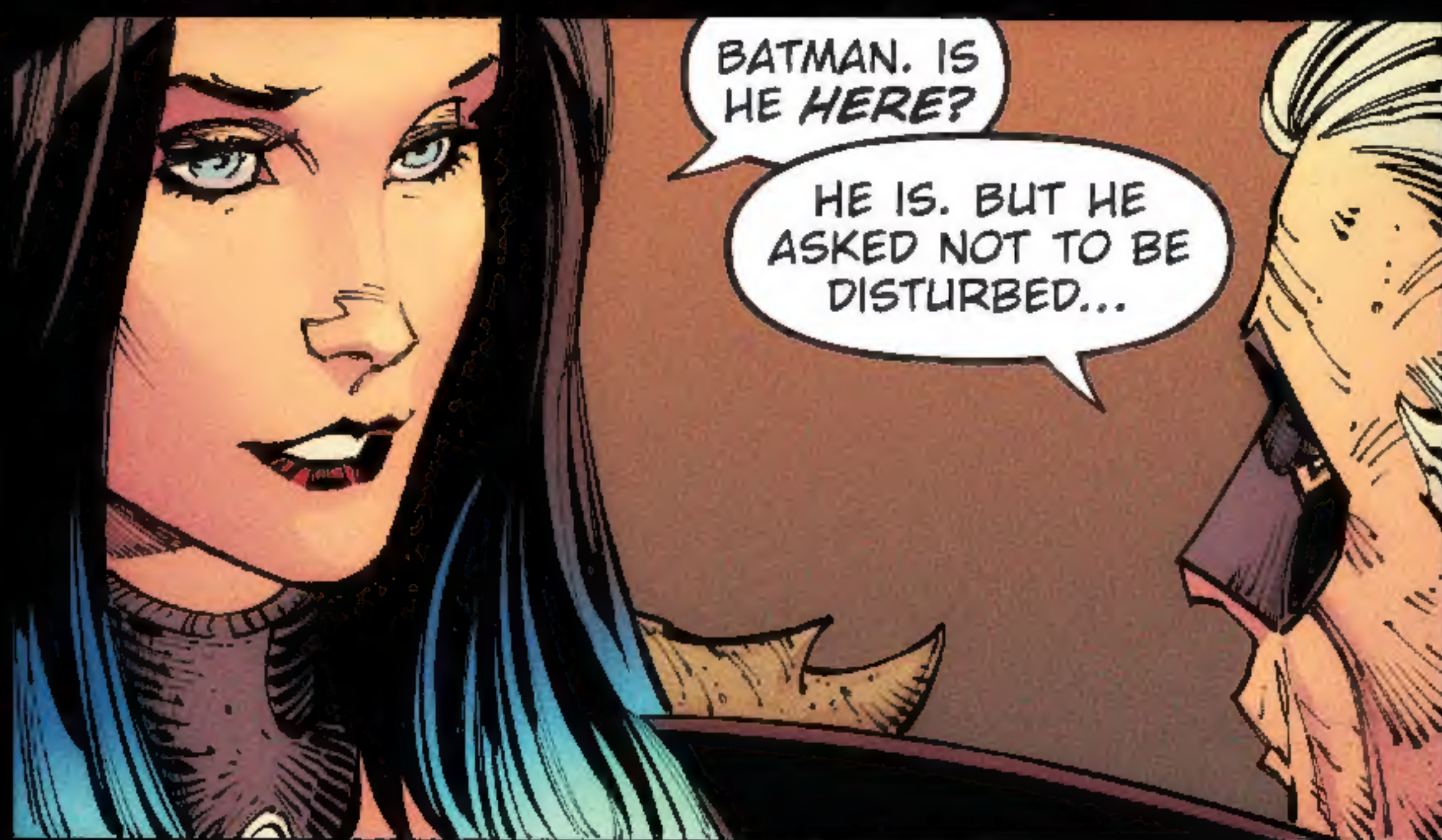
YOU AS WELL,
DIANA. TELL ME, THE
WORLD ABOVE--CAN
WE *WIN* IT BACK?

THAT'S
WHY WE'RE
HERE, OLD
FRIEND.



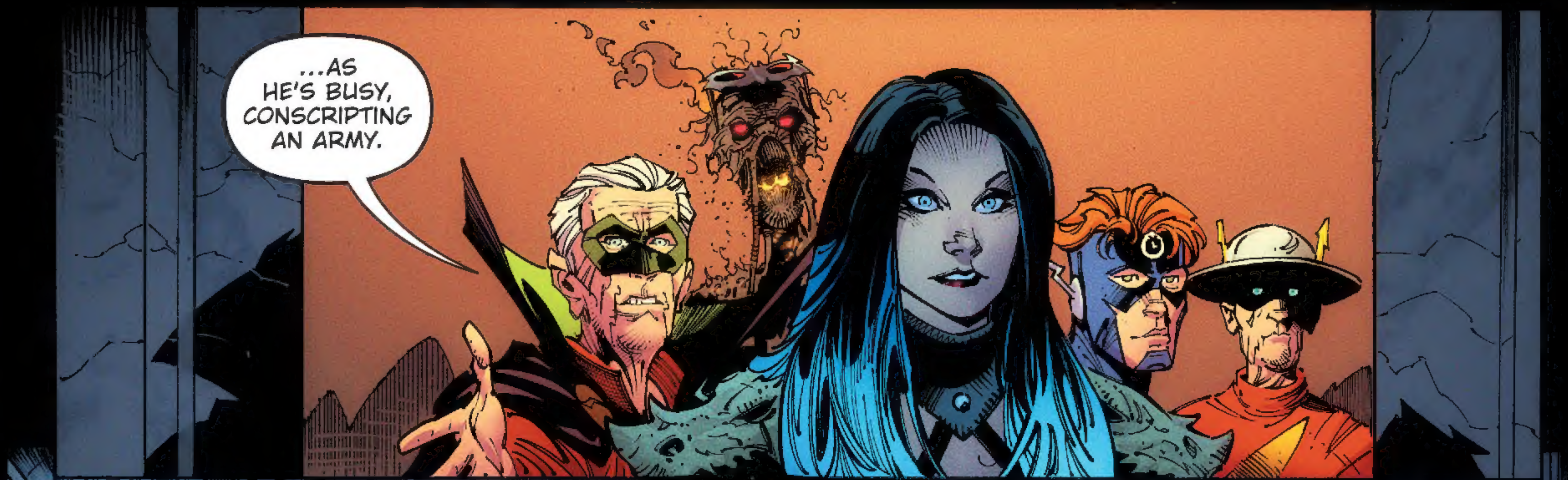
TELL ME
YOU STILL
REMEMBER
ME, JAY?

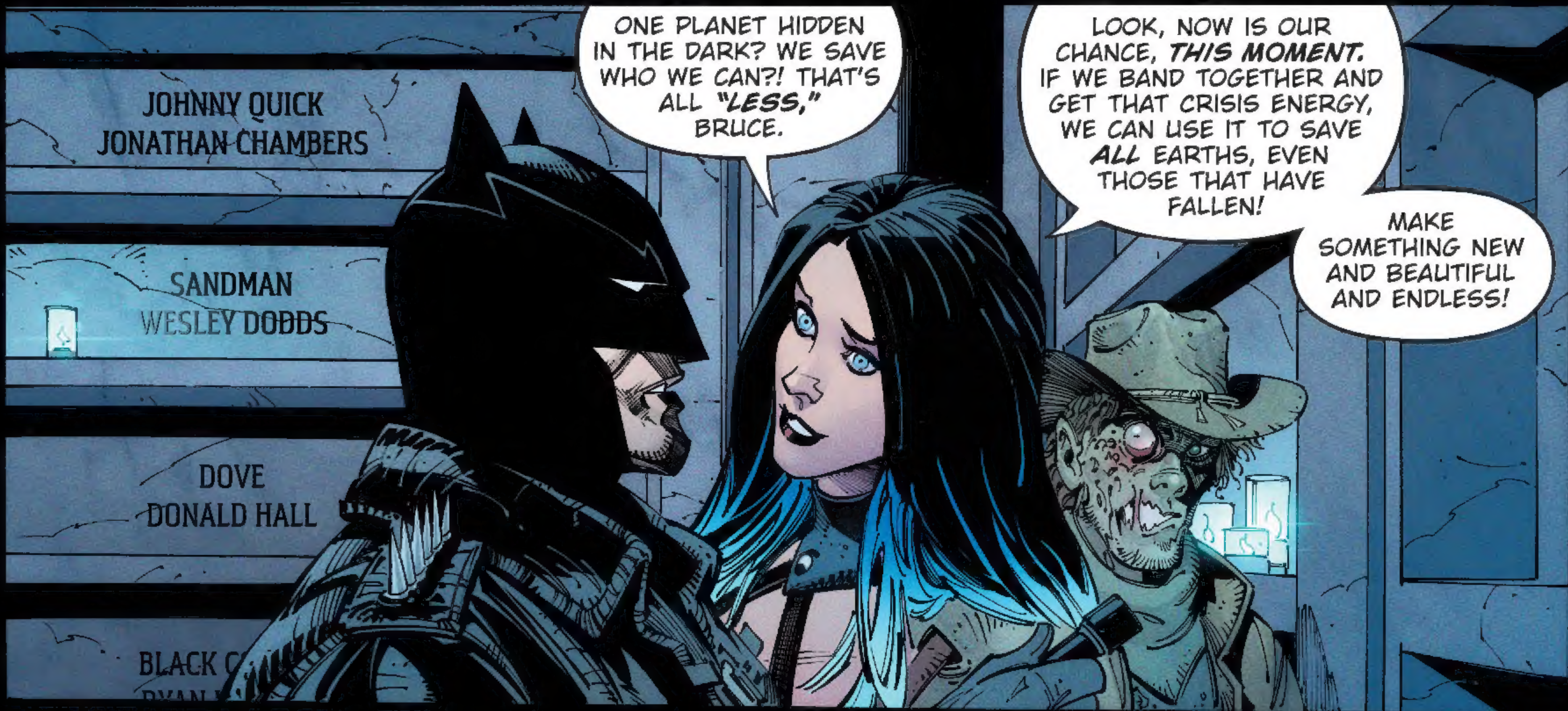
I'LL
NEVER FORGET
YOU AGAIN, KID.
BRING IT IN.



BATMAN. IS
HE *HERE*?

HE IS. BUT HE
ASKED NOT TO BE
DISTURBED...





ONE PLANET HIDDEN IN THE DARK? WE SAVE WHO WE CAN?! THAT'S ALL "LESS," BRUCE.

LOOK, NOW IS OUR CHANCE, *THIS* MOMENT. IF WE BAND TOGETHER AND GET THAT CRISIS ENERGY, WE CAN USE IT TO SAVE *ALL* EARTHS, EVEN THOSE THAT HAVE FALLEN!

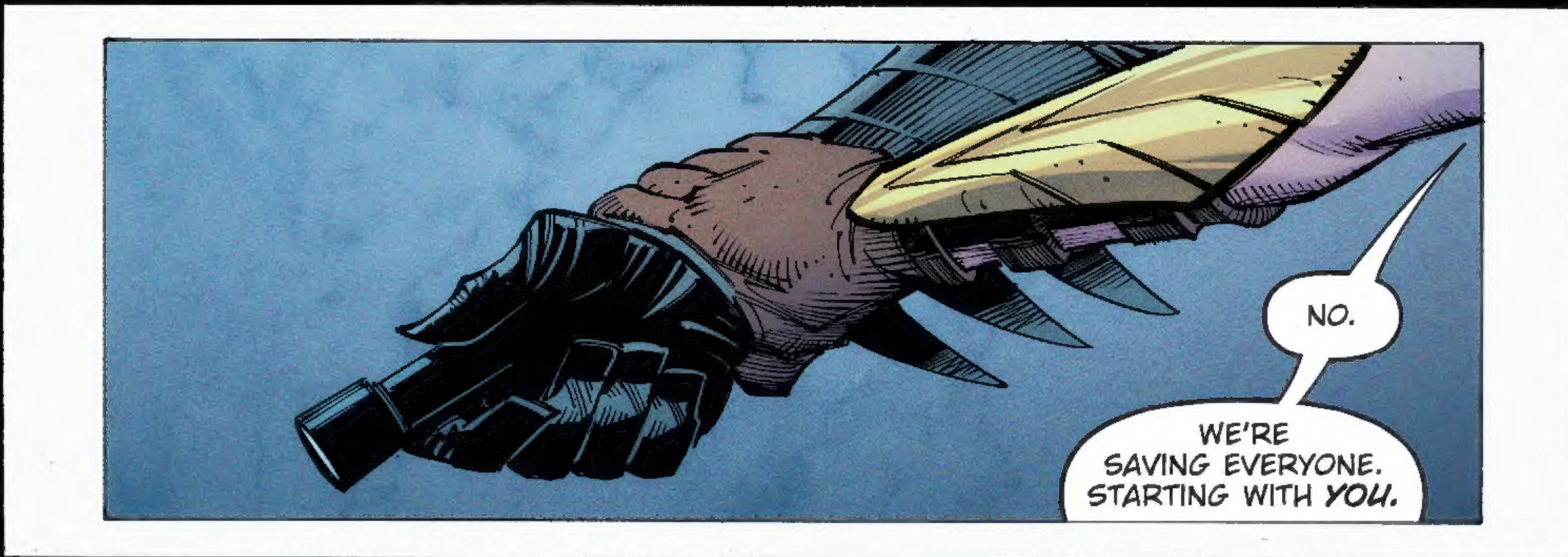
MAKE SOMETHING NEW AND BEAUTIFUL AND ENDLESS!



WILL YOU *LISTEN* TO YOURSELF, DIANA?! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO CREATE SOME NEW INFINITE MULTIVERSE?!

JUST... LEAVE SO I CAN GET BACK TO WORK.

I SAID LEA--



NO.

WE'RE SAVING EVERYONE. STARTING WITH YOU.



WHAT THE *HELL* HAPPENED TO YOU IN THAT LAST BATTLE, HUH?

WHAT CHANGED INSIDE YOU?!



ALL RIGHT. YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?!

MY SECRET?!

FINE, I'LL TELL YOU! I...

...

~~SIGH~~ IT DOESN'T MATTER. WHAT MATTERS...

"...IS THAT YOU'RE WRONG, AND I KNOW YOU'RE WRONG BECAUSE I MADE THE SAME MISTAKE LAST TIME WE FACED DOWN AN EVENT LIKE THIS.

"WHEN BARBATOS ATTACKED, I WAS THE ONE WHO SAID WE SHOULD GO AFTER THE *TENTH METAL*, THE VERY BUILDING BLOCK OF REALITY. I WAS THE ONE WHO SAID WE SHOULD GO TO THE *FORGE OF WORLDS*, REMEMBER?

"I WAS THE CENTER OF THE CONFLICT, AND I THOUGHT BY REACHING HIGHER TOGETHER WE'D NOT ONLY WIN BUT MAKE THE UNIVERSE *BETTER*.

"INSTEAD, WE BROKE THE *SOURCE WALL* AND SET HER FREE, THE OLDEST VILLAIN THIS UNIVERSE HAS KNOWN: *PERPETUA*. AND WITH LUTHOR'S HELP SHE'S BECOME A HUNDRED TIMES MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY BARBATOS.

"WHEN WE REACHED HIGHER AGAIN, AND TRIED TO USE THE ENERGY FROM THIS DR. MANHATTAN TO COMBAT HER? WE FELL.

"NOW THERE'RE BARELY ANY EARTHS LEFT. THOSE WHO OPPOSE HER END UP ON HER ANTENNAE. THOSE WHO OPPOSE HER JOIN HER ARMY OF MONSTERS.

"AND YOU...YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT TRYING SOMETHING EVEN CRAZIER..."



EARLY ON, I ONCE ASKED YOU, WHY BATS? YOU GAVE SOME ANSWER ABOUT COWARDLY LOTS AND SO ON, BUT AFTERWARD, **ALFRED**, HE TOLD ME "BECAUSE BATS ARE THE **ONLY** MAMMAL THAT FLIES."

BATMAN IS ABOUT TEACHING PEOPLE TO ASPIRE PAST WHAT SEEMS POSSIBLE.

WELL, I NEED TO STAY HERE... ON THE GROUND THIS TIME.



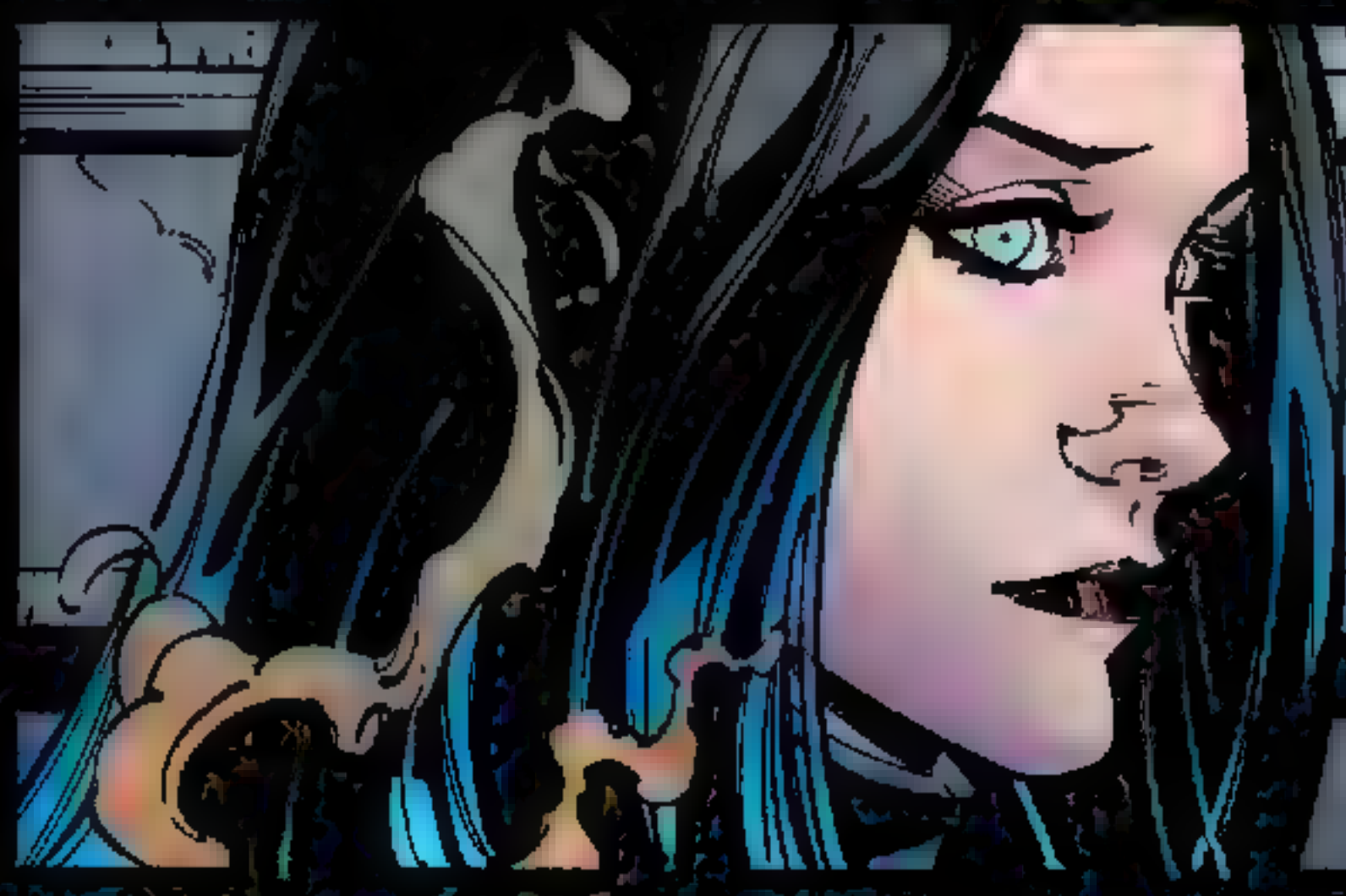
FINE. BUT LOOK AROUND, BRUCE. YOU'RE NOT ON THE GROUND. YOU'RE **UNDER** IT.



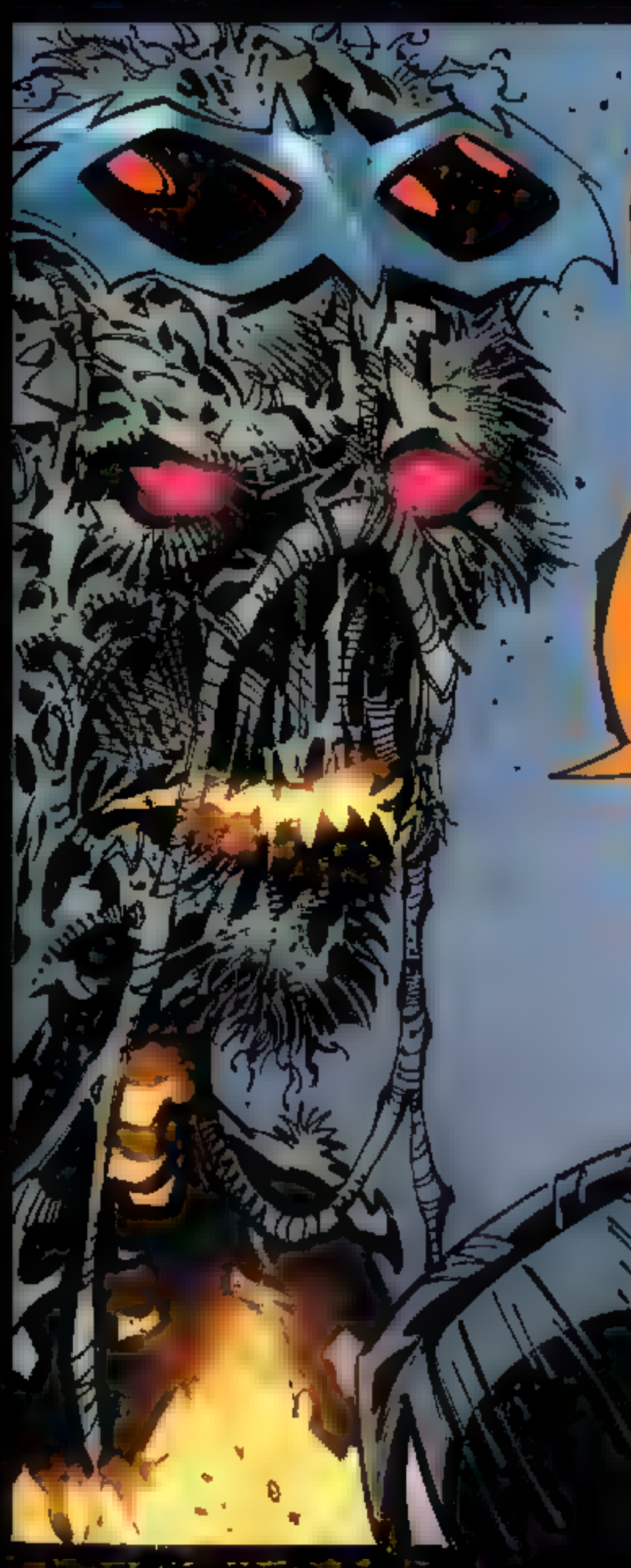
HE'S JUST SCARED. GIVE HIM TIME.

WE DON'T HAVE TIME. COME ON.

PLEASE, DIANA. WAIT A MOMENT.



... WHAT IF HE'S RIGHT, ALEC? WHAT IF IT'S HUBRIS? WHAT IF IT'S TIME TO ADMIT IT, TO...STOP REACHING.



AS AN ELEMENTAL, I COMMUNICATE WITH ALL LIVING PLANTS, BUT AS A HUMAN, I LOVED STUDYING EXTINCT ONES. ONE OF MY FAVORITES WAS CALLED A GILBOA.

A PREHISTORIC FERN THAT GREW TALLER THAN TODAY'S TREES. A CRAZY, MUTANT LIFE-FORM. EVENTUALLY, BECAUSE OF ITS HEIGHT, OTHER PLANTS GREW UP BENEATH IT AND STRANGLING IT OUT.

SO YOU AGREE WITH BRUCE.

NO, BECAUSE IN ITS HEIGHT IT HELPED QUICKEN THE ATMOSPHERE'S TRANSFORMATION.

AND NOW FERNS ARE ONE OF THE MOST PREVALENT PLANTS ALIVE.



MY POINT IS, REACHING FOR WHAT WE MAY NEVER GRASP, BE IT LIGHT OR GRACE, IS NEVER WRONG.

SEE? BE THE FERN. THAT'S THE SAME THING I JUST TOLD BATS.

MINUS THE FERN.

AND WITH SWEARS.

BRUCE? YOU'RE IN?



JUST... TELL ME YOU HAVE A PLAN?

WHILE WALLY STAYS HIDDEN HERE, WE RESCUE OUR FRIENDS FROM NEW APOKOLIPS, TRAVEL INTO THE **DARK MULTIVERSE** TO THE ORIGINAL **CRISES**, STEAL THE ENERGY BEING FUNNELED TO PERPETUA, AND USE IT TO POWER UP WALLY SO HE CAN DESTROY HER AND HELP US RESTART THE UNIVERSE.

WELL THAT'S EITHER A PLAN OR YOU'RE HAVING A STROKE.



WE NEED TO MOVE FAST.

ON IT...

HEY, BAR--





WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG? I HOPE THIS IS WORTH THE STOP, JAY. IF HE DETECTS ME--

WALLY?!

BARRY, MY GOD IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU.



COME HERE!

TRIPLE-FLASH HUG!



BARRY, HOW MUCH IS LEFT OF THE *SPEED FORCE*?

NOT MUCH. I'VE NEARLY BURNT OUT WHAT'S LEFT OF IT TRYING TO GO BACK IN TIME TO FIX THIS.

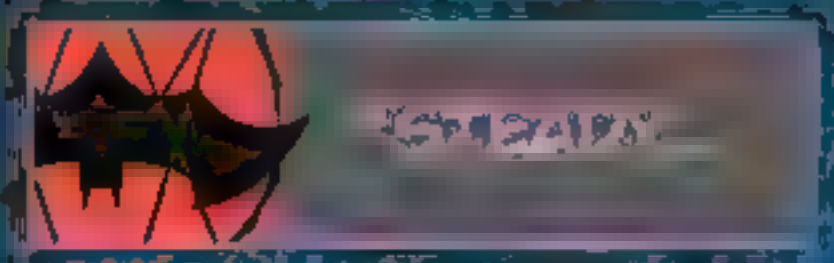
BUT THERE'S NO WAY OUT OF THE PRESENT.



WE'RE NOT LOOKING TO TIME-TRAVEL. WE'RE LOOKING TO GET TO NEW APOKOLIPS TO FREE OUR FRIENDS.

AND THEN WIN.

WELL WELL. MAYBE THIS *WAS* WORTH STOPPING FOR AFTER ALL.



THE CHAIRMAN

THE CHAIRMAN AS
YOU CAN NOW

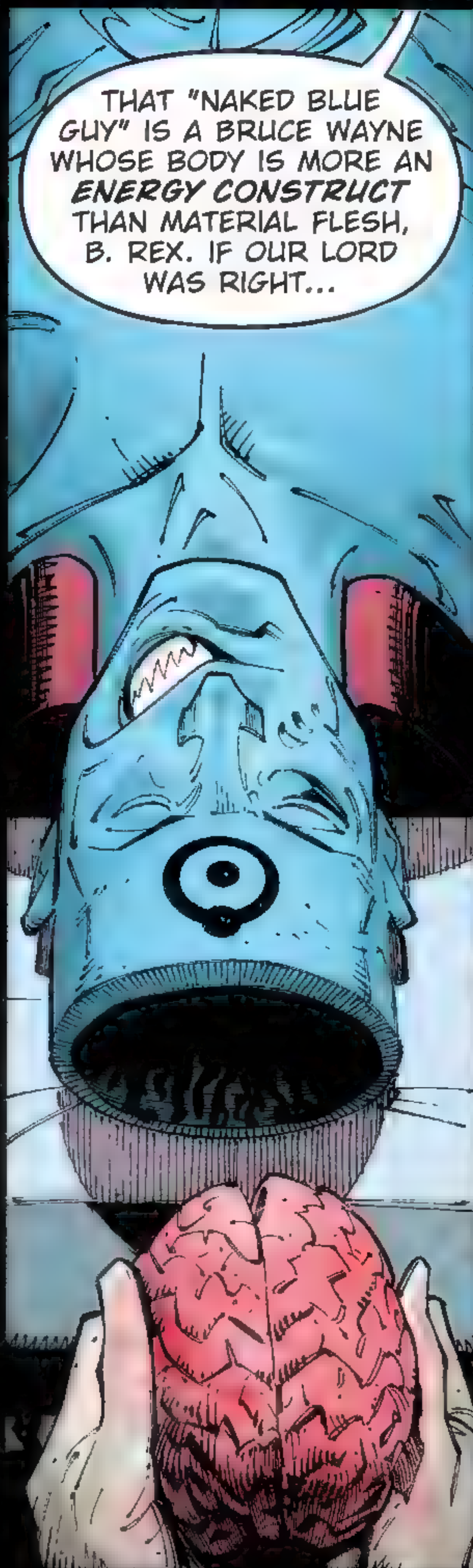
BITE THE HAND

MEANWHILE, IN CASTLE BAT.



THAT'S IT, ALFROOD. THAT'S IT...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. HIS BRAIN GOES INTO THE NAKED BLUE GUY AND IT'S SUPPOSED TO JUST...TURN ON?



THAT "NAKED BLUE GUY" IS A BRUCE WAYNE WHOSE BODY IS MORE AN **ENERGY CONSTRUCT** THAN MATERIAL FLESH, B. REX. IF OUR LORD WAS RIGHT...

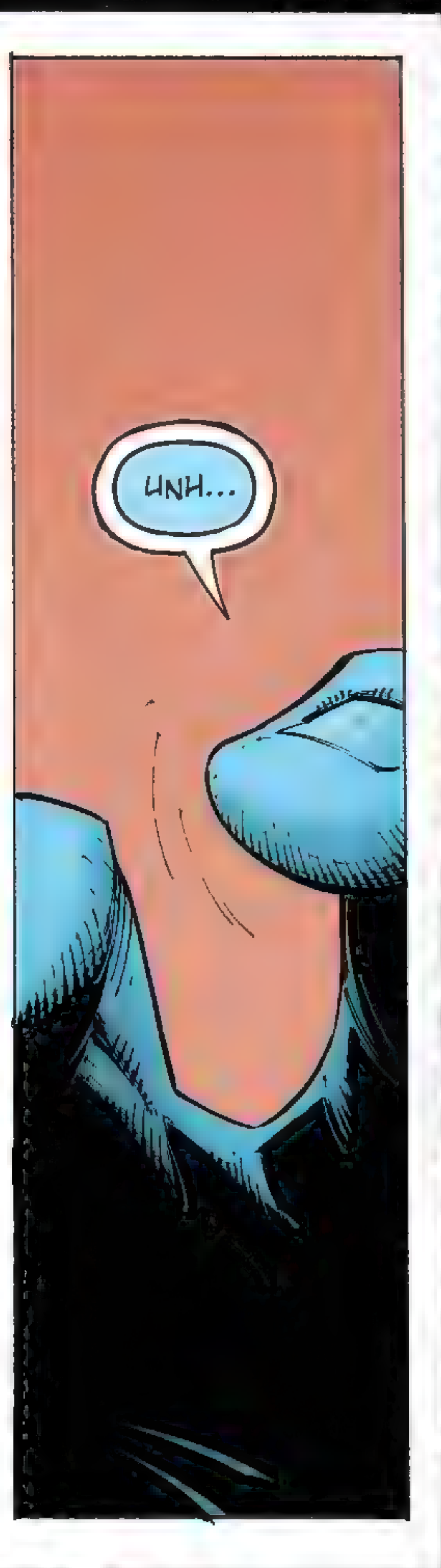


...IT **SHOULD** ABSORB HIS MIND AS ITS OWN, AND, IN THE PROCESS, MAKE HIM INTO SOMETHING FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN HE WAS IN LIFE...A BEING OF **NEAR-UNLIMITED POWER...**

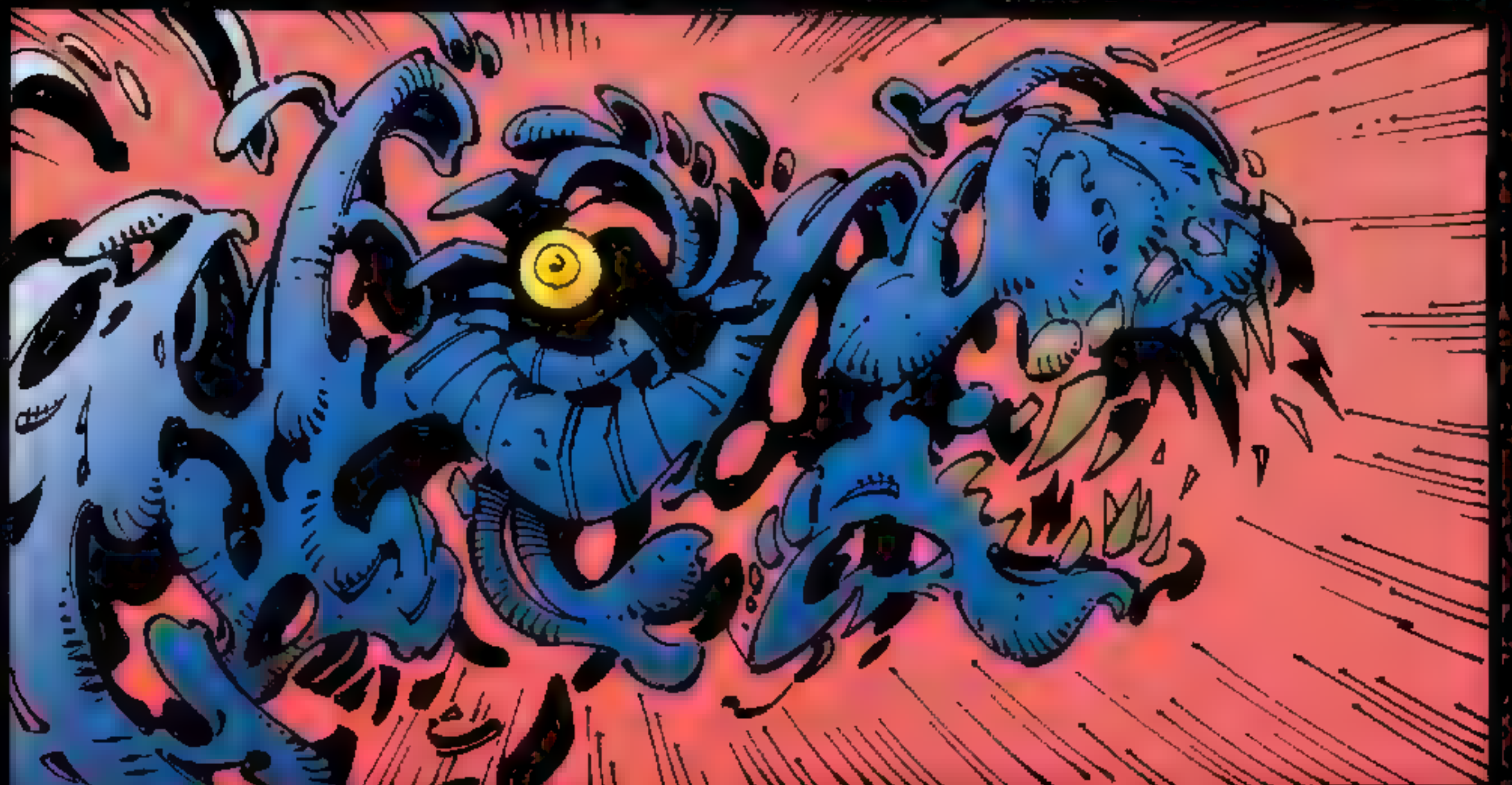
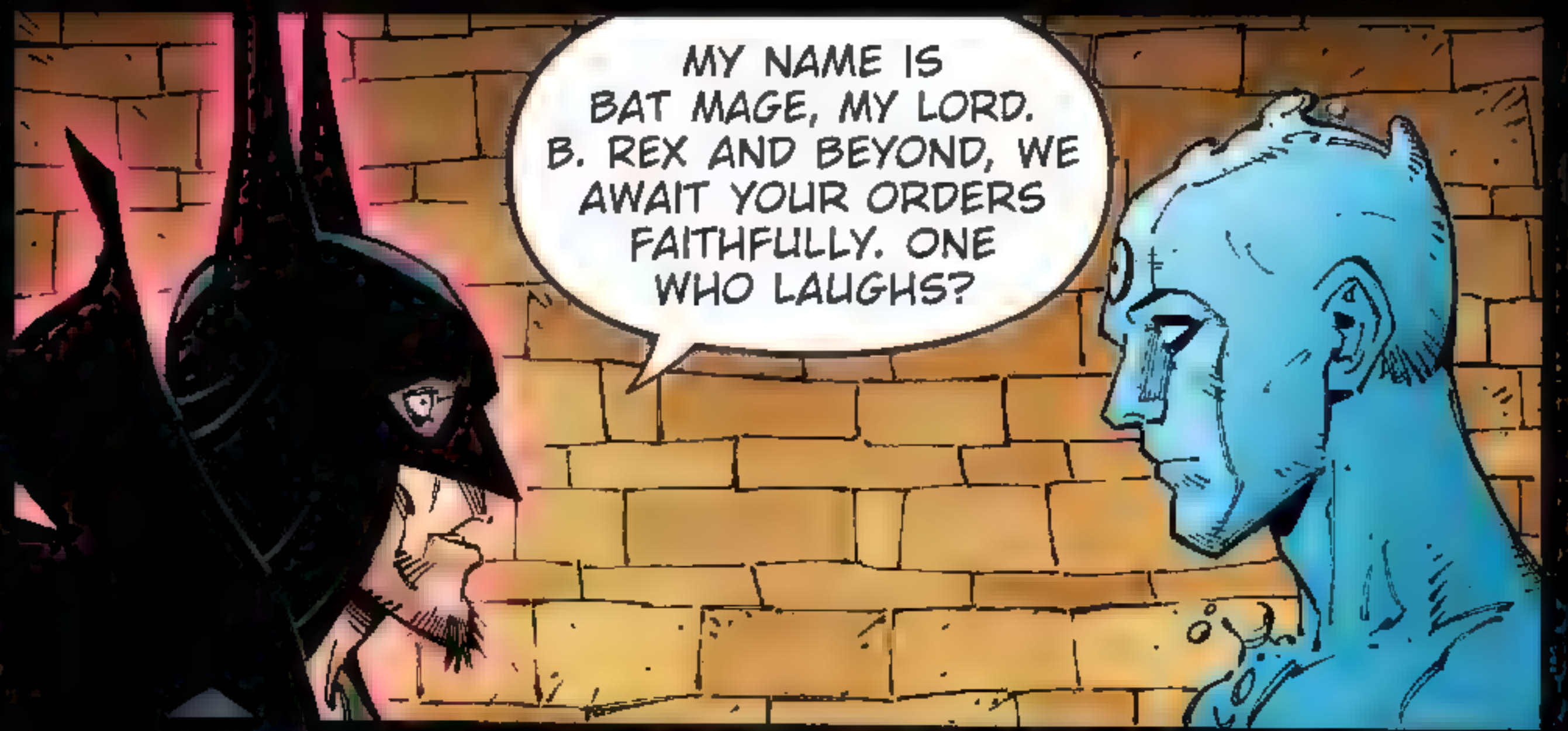


SER?

SER U SHALL BECOME A BAT, FATHUR?



UNH...

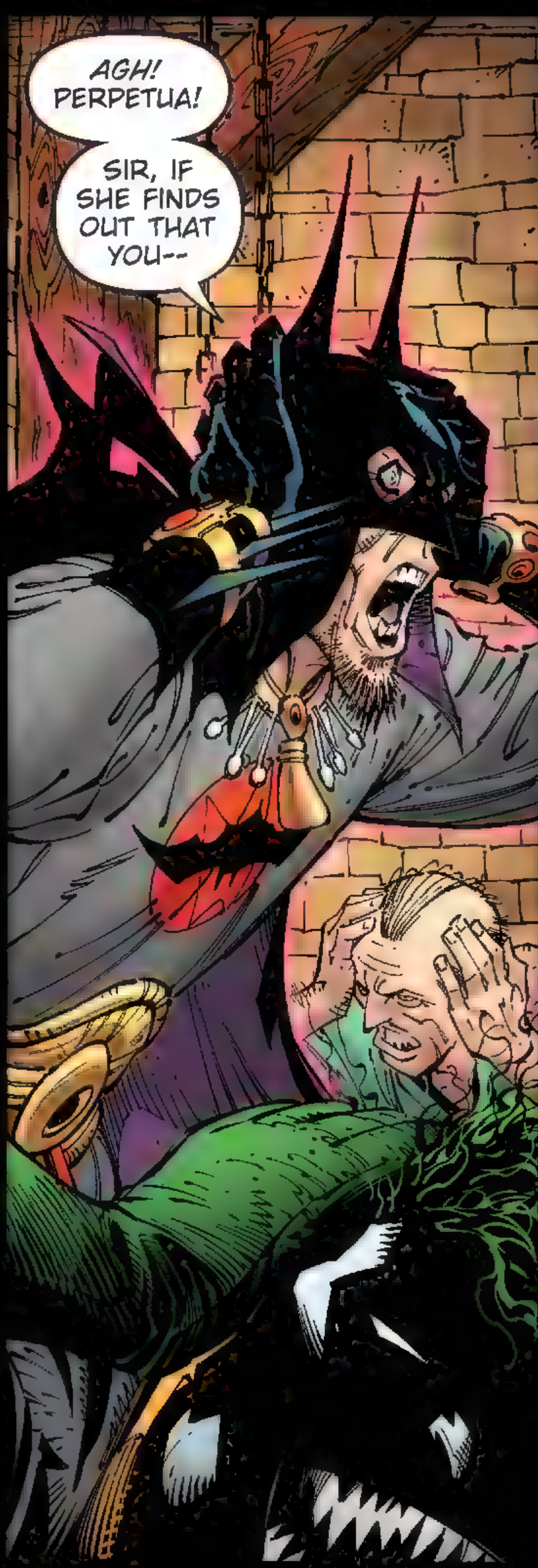




THERE IS
NO NAME FOR
ONE LIKE ME.
NOT YET.

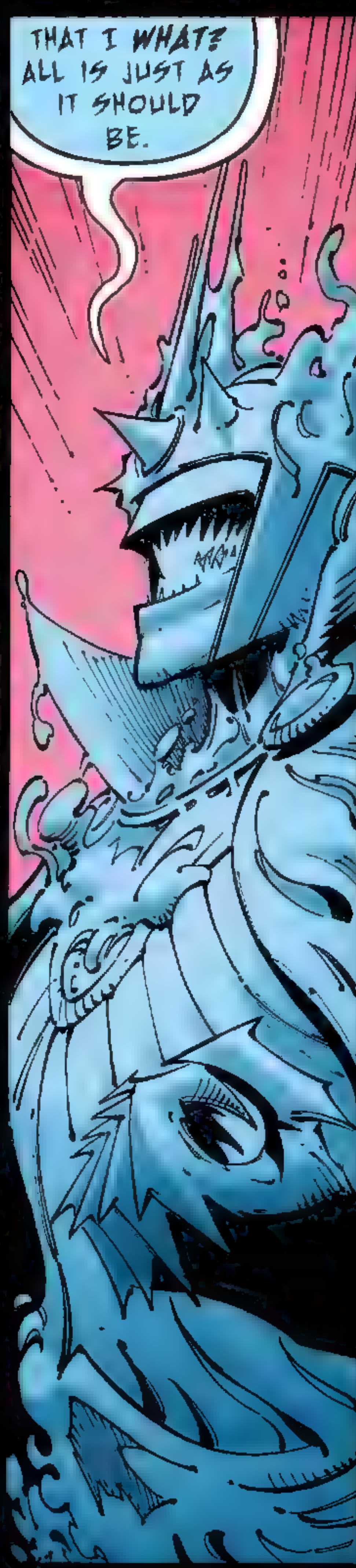


ONE WHO
LAUGHS!

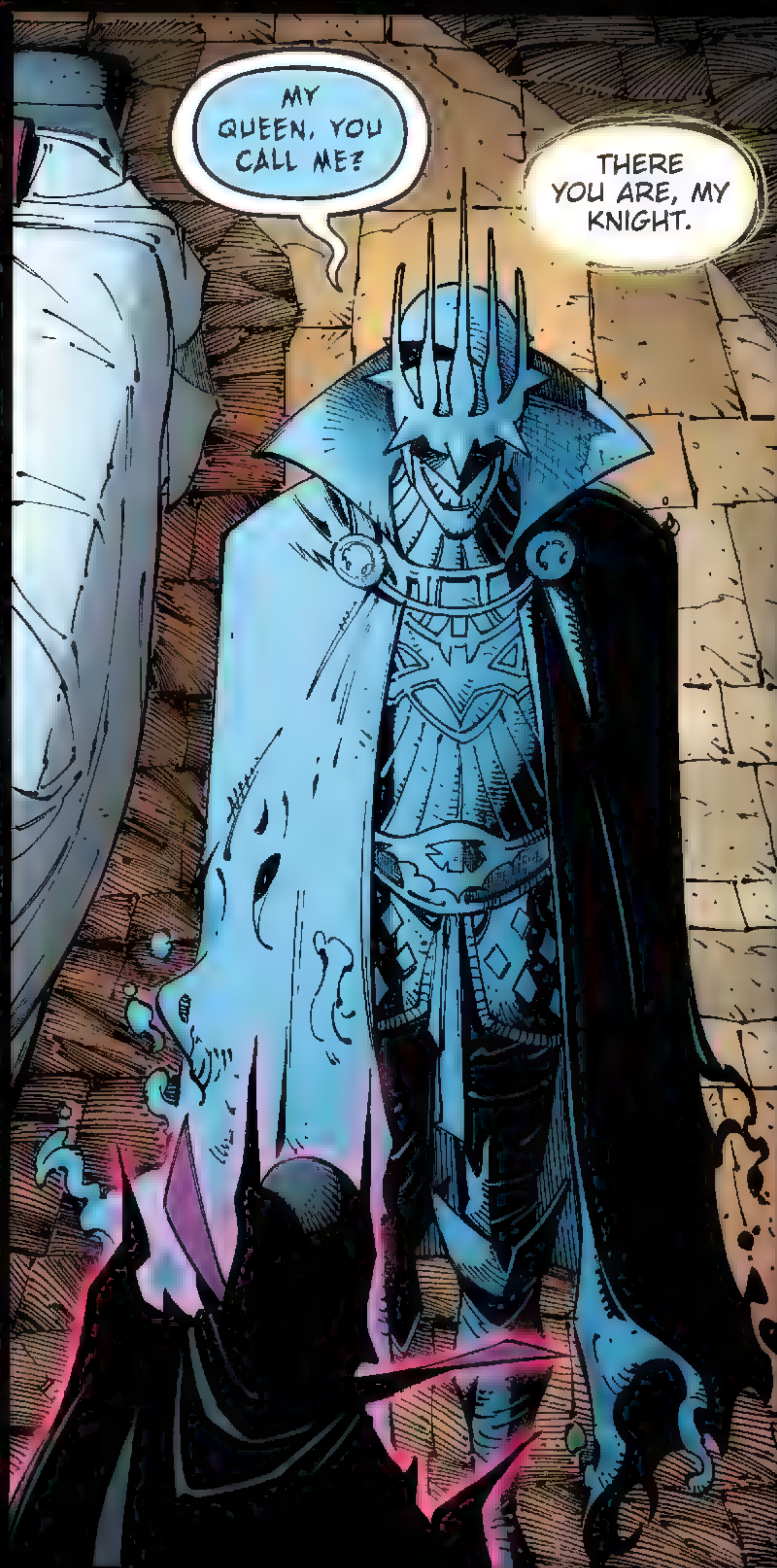


AGH!
PERPETUA!

SIR, IF
SHE FINDS
OUT THAT
YOU--



THAT I WHAT?
ALL IS JUST AS
IT SHOULD
BE.



MY
QUEEN, YOU
CALL ME?

THERE
YOU ARE, MY
KNIGHT.



I SENSED A
DISTURBANCE.

ON
THE CONTRARY,
ALL IS WELL
HERE. AND OUT
THERE?



I HAVE
CONQUERED
ANOTHER
EARTH. SIX
REMAIN.

LISTEN
WELL, MY KNIGHT.
I *KNOW* YOU ARE
A TRICKSTER.

BUT THE
BEINGS LIKE ME, MY
KIND, "*HANDS*"--IF THEY
SENSE WHAT'S HAPPENING
HERE, THEY WILL COME
FOR THIS REALITY AGAIN,
AS THEY DID WHEN I
FIRST CREATED
IT.

ONLY I CAN
CONCEAL US FROM
THEM. I TRUST YOU
SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU
KNOW THAT IF YOU
USURP ME, THE *HANDS*
WILL COME FOR
US BOTH...



...AND MY
JUDGMENT...



...WHILE
HARSH...



...IS NOTHING
COMPARED TO THE
RECKONING **THEY**
WOULD BRING.



SHE IS
GONE.

MY...MY
LORD? WE ARE
AT YOUR SERVICE.
WHAT WOULD YOU
HAVE US DO?

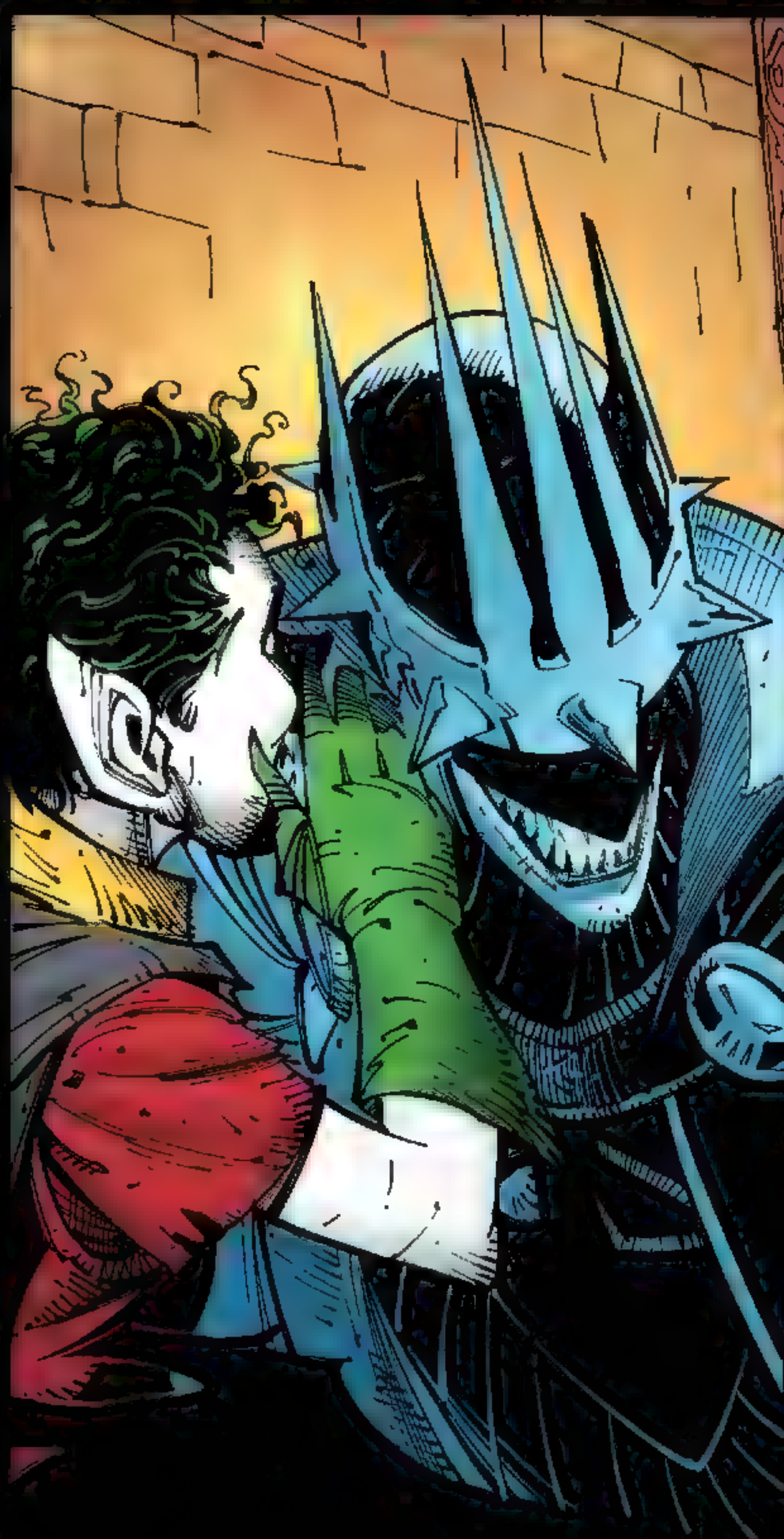


NOTHING.

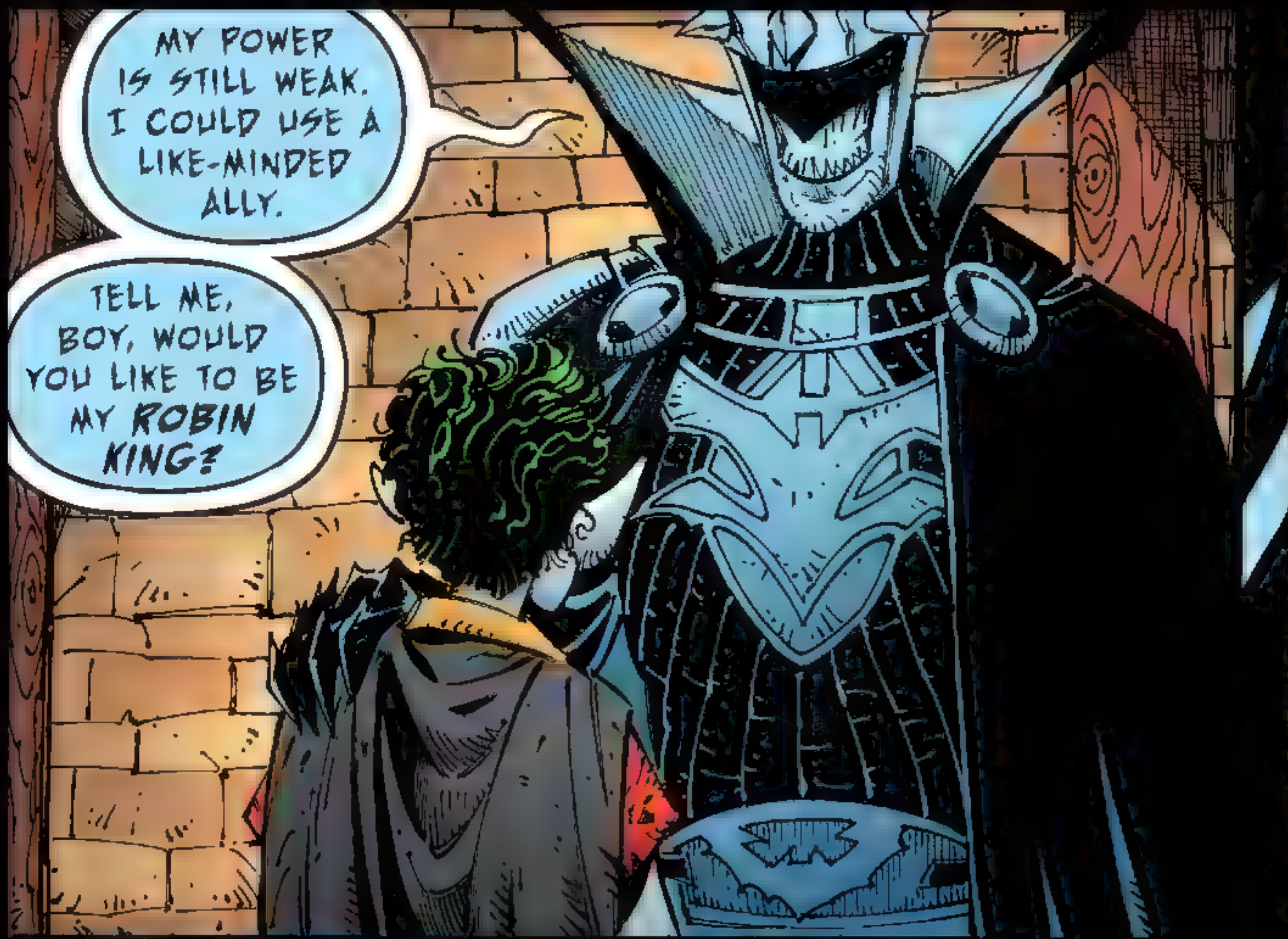


ALL OF THEM
WERE ADMIRABLY
VICIOUS, YET...
WANTING.

BUT YOU.
IN YOU I SENSE
A DARKNESS...TELL
ME YOUR STORY,
CHILD.



OOH.



MY POWER IS STILL WEAK. I COULD USE A LIKE-MINDED ALLY.

TELL ME, BOY, WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE MY ROBIN KING?



CROW...N.



HEH. OH, YOU'LL HAVE A CROWN.

NOW, WE HAVE WORK TO DO. SEE, THEY ARE MAKING THEIR MOVE OUT THERE... I CAN FEEL IT. SO WE MUST MAKE OURS.

DIANA SEEKS TO RENEW THE MULTIVERSE, RE-BUILD IT FROM SCRATCH. WELL SO DO I.

BUT I WILL BUILD SOMETHING NEVER SEEN BEFORE: 52 PLANETS OF NIGHTMARE, BEAUTIFUL IN THEIR HORROR.



NOW I'LL TAKE MY NEW FORM, CHILD.

DON'T BE AFRAID.



BLUE IS FOR SOLDIERS OF MORNING, OF LIGHT.

BUT ME... I AM NO DAWN.



NO, YOU CAN CALL ME...

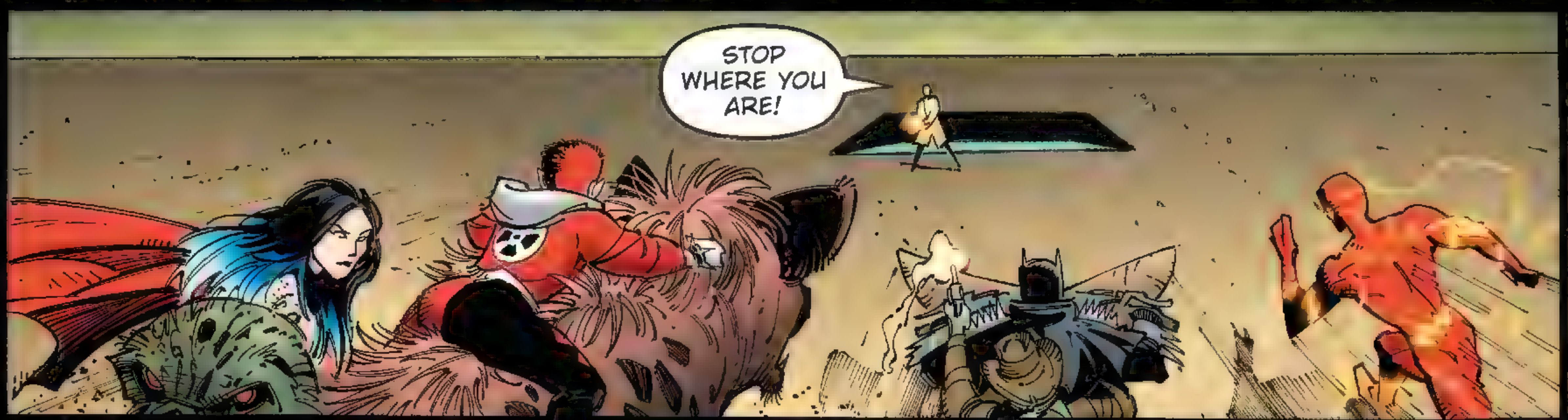
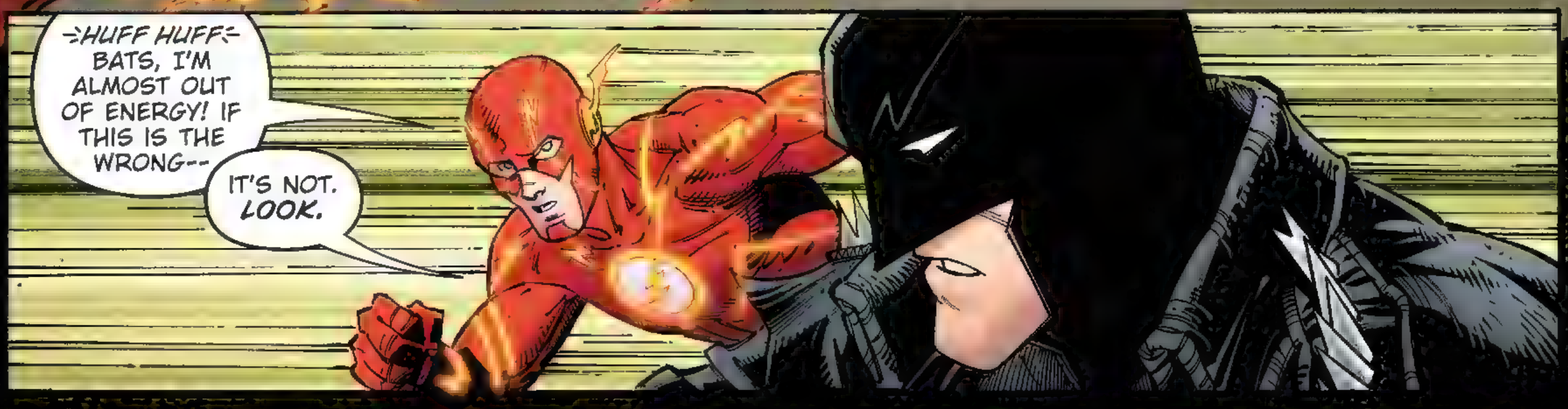


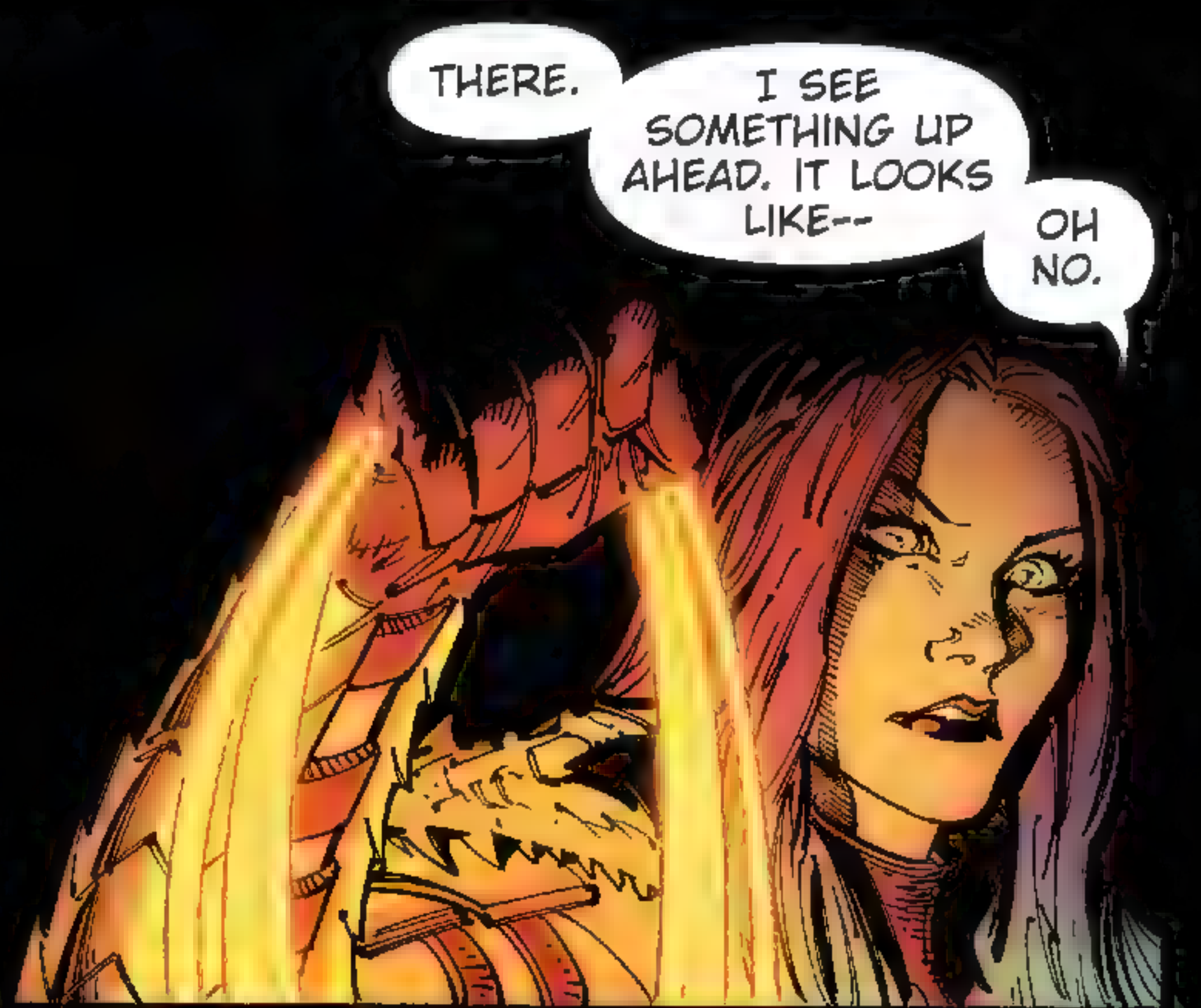
...THE
DARKEST
KNIGHT.



TOY SOLDIERS

THE ARKHAM WASTELAND.







DARK
KNIGHTS,
STAND
DOWN!

THEY'RE
RE-CREATIONS. I BUILT
THIS BUNKER AFTER OUR
LAST FIGHT WITH **BARBATOS**.
IT HOUSES MACHINES CREATED BY
TOYMASTER IN CASE THERE
WAS EVER ANOTHER
INCURSION.

YES,
SIR.

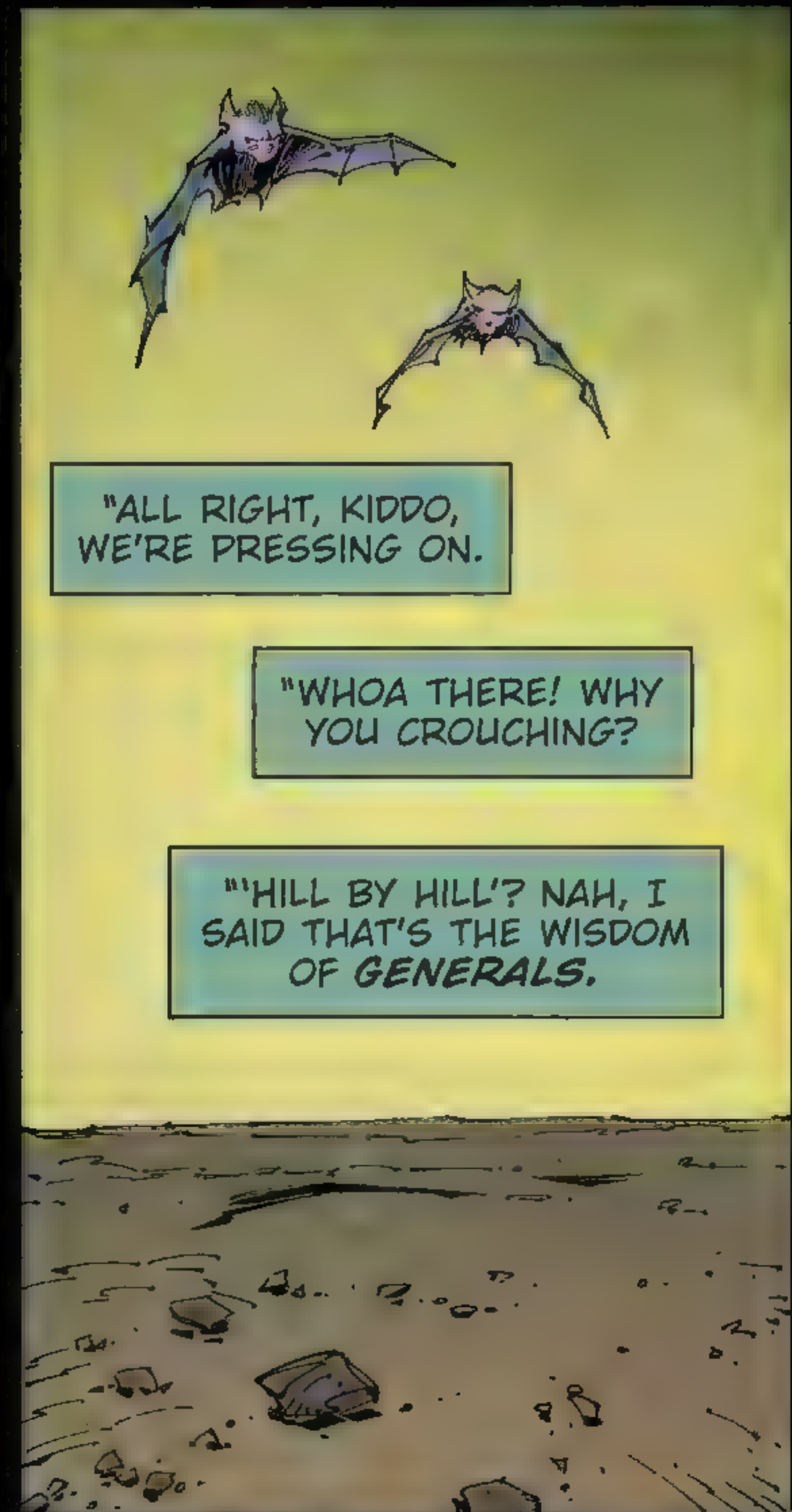
I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.



TOYMASTER? THE
LAST THING HE BUILT US
WAS A COMBINING JUSTICE
LEAGUE **SUPER-ROBOT**.
BUT YOU'RE SAYING HE
MADE SOMETHING STEALTH
THAT CAN GET US TO NEW
APOKOLIPS UNDETECTED?
SOMETHING
SUBTLE?

...
NOT
EXACTLY
SUBTLE.

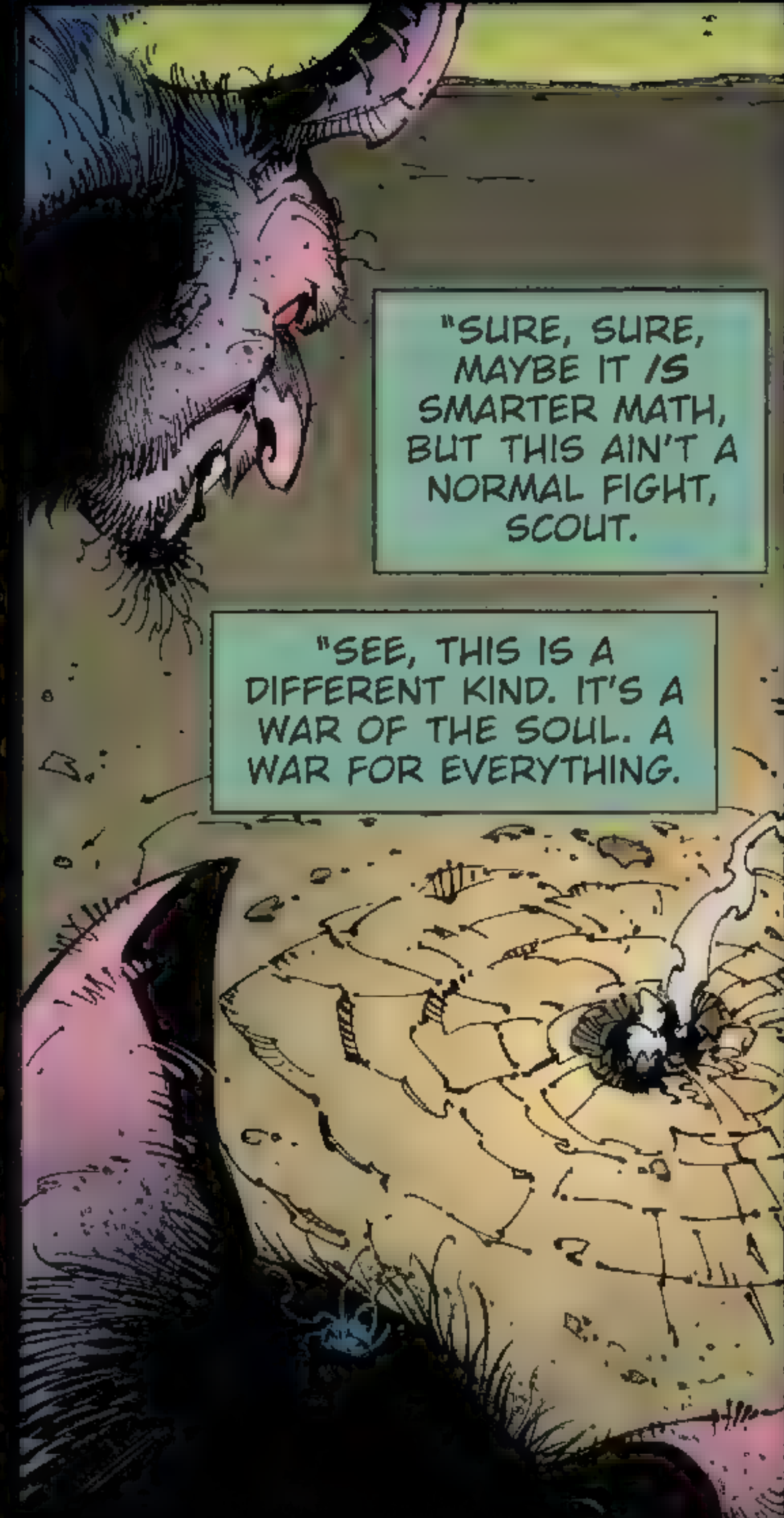
*SEE METAL #1.



"ALL RIGHT, KIDDO,
WE'RE PRESSING ON.

"WHOA THERE! WHY
YOU CROUCHING?

"HILL BY HILL'? NAH, I
SAID THAT'S THE WISDOM
OF **GENERALS**.



"SURE, SURE,
MAYBE IT *IS*
SMARTER MATH,
BUT THIS AIN'T A
NORMAL FIGHT,
SCOUT.

"SEE, THIS IS A
DIFFERENT KIND. IT'S A
WAR OF THE SOUL. A
WAR FOR EVERYTHING.



"AND IN *THOSE*, THE ONLY WAY
TO WIN IS TO GO RIGHT DOWN
THE #5%~ MIDDLE. NO WAVERING.
DRAGON SWEAT AND EAGLE FIRE!

"SO WHEN
THEY SEE US
COMING...THEY
KNOW.

"KNOW THAT WE'RE BIGGER AND
BADDER THAN ANYTHING THEY'VE
EVER SEEN BEFORE..."

"...AND WE'RE
COMING RIGHT
FOR THEM."



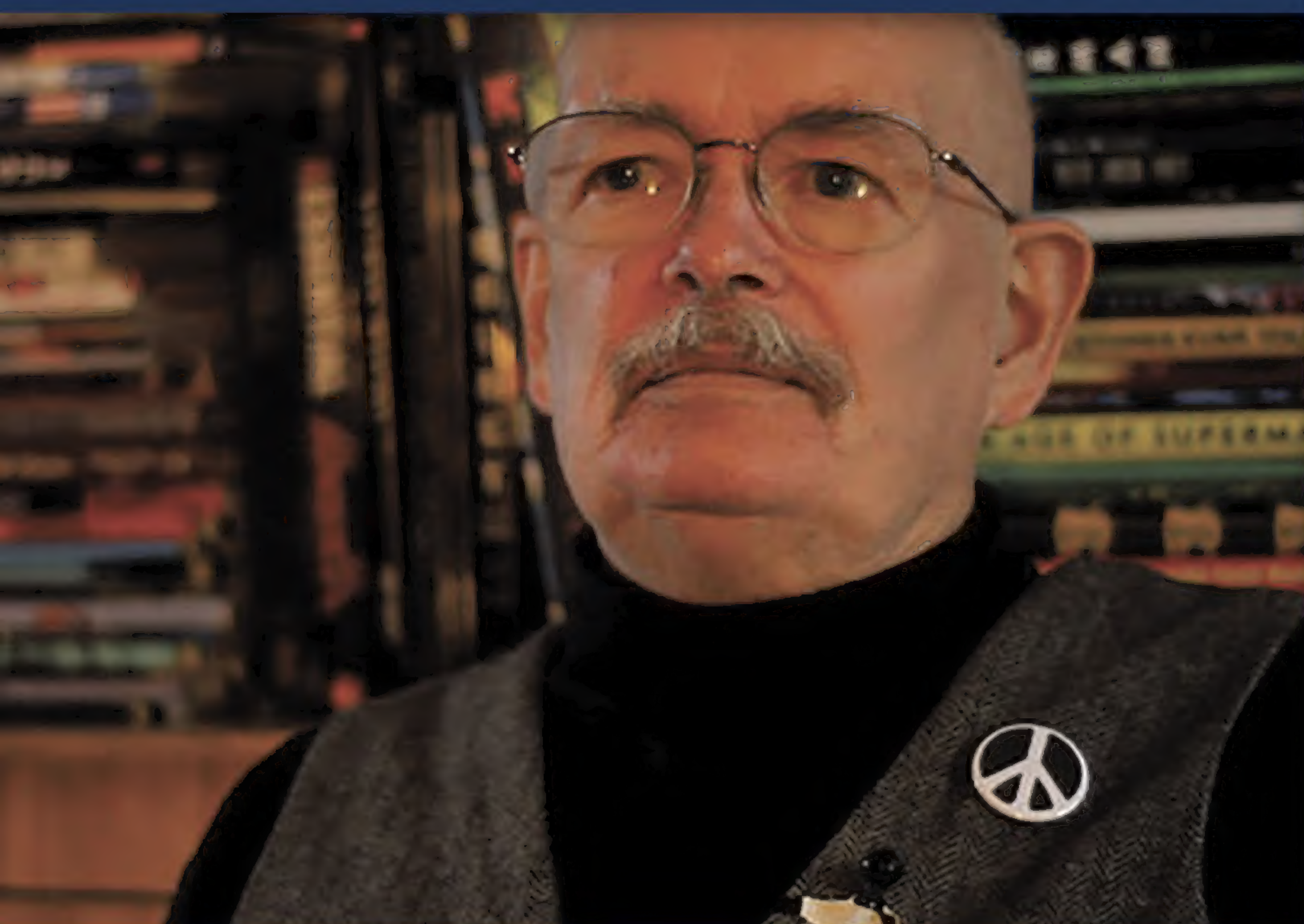
TO BE CONTINUED



Demonstrate for me possibilities I've never thought of and present me with heroes who will give me courage and hope. Ease my sorrows and increase my joy. Teach me compassion. Entertain and enchant and enlighten me. Tell me a story.

—**DENNIS O'NEIL**

1939-2020



R.I.P. DENNY O' NEIL—one of the visionary architects of DC Comics who helped revive Batman in the 1970s and remains my favorite Green Lantern writer to date. Through his editing and writing, Denny was one of the earliest writers whose work and focus on social issues pushed comics to wider respectability and acceptance as an art form. Through his work and mentorship, he influenced generations of writers and artists. Our condolences to his family and many fans around the world.

—**JIM LEE**





Leave it to Scott Snyder and Greg Capullo to deliver the most **METAL** brain transplant in comic book history. *Dark Nights: Death Metal* #2 saw the Batman Who Laughs, seemingly out for the count following a severe case of being chopped in half by Wonder Woman and her Chainsaw of Truth, getting his brain transferred into the body of the character who could only be called the Bat-Manhattan Who Laughs.

It's a wild, weird, and wonderful moment in a series already full of them, and here's how it came together—from Snyder's script to Capullo and Jonathan Glapion's black-and-white art and FCO Plascencia's colors.

TITLE CARD: "STALK"

PAGE 11

We **CUT** to **CASTLE BAT** where **3 EVIL ALFREDS** are going to be working to insert the **BRAIN** of the **BMWL** into the body of the **BAT MANHATTAN WHO LAUGHS**. We can open on the BMWL's body if you want, cut in half, dead, as a **GROBLIN** (Robin-goblin) pulls out his **BRAIN**.

...and hands it to the **ALFREDS**. As for the **ALFREDS**, I see all as looking evil and being in **SURGICAL SCRUBS** but clearly being **ALFREDS**. The first could be part nano-bots, like a **BORG**, the second could be very muscular, like a badass thug **ALFRED**. The third I see as the main one, a kind of classic Alfred but bigger, taller, more ghoulish with a **PATCH** over his eye. As ridiculous as this all is, the hope is to keep it fun and a bit spooky. So whatever works! The main **ALFRED** places it inside the glowing cavity...Also in the room are the **SORCERER BATMAN**, the **DINO-BATMAN** and the **BATMAN BEYOND**.



DC COMICS BOB HARRAS Senior VP – Editor-in-Chief, DC Comics JIM LEE Publisher & Chief Creative Officer BOBBIE CHASE VP – Global Publishing Initiatives & Digital Strategy DON FALLETTI VP – Manufacturing Operations & Workflow Management LAWRENCE GANEM VP – Talent Services ALISON GILL Senior VP – Manufacturing & Operations HANK KANALZ Senior VP – Publishing Strategy & Support Services DAN MIRON VP – Publishing Operations NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – Manufacturing Administration & Design NANCY SPEARS VP – Sales JONAH WEILAND VP – Marketing & Creative Services MICHELE R. WELLS VP & Executive Editor, Young Reader

DARK NIGHTS: DEATH METAL 2. September 2020. Published by DC Comics, 2900 W. Alameda Avenue, Burbank, CA 91505. GST # is R125921072. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork. For Advertising and Custom Publishing contact dccomicsadvertising@dccomics.com. For details on DC Comics Ratings, visit dccomics.com/go/ratings. DC – a WarnerMedia Company.

The Last Kryptonian-DCP

